

# Joanne De Groot Learning Event: Breathe New Life into Your Library

Saskatchewan School Library Association

THE MEDIUM – FALL 2012

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## Saskatchewan School Library Association

In September, SSLA hosted the first of four online Learning Events scheduled for the 2012-2013 year. The presenter was Joanne de Groot, an instructor at the University of Alberta. Joanne provided an informative presentation on ways teacher-librarians can enhance library programming and student participation.

Joanne began the presentation by noting that our libraries are no longer simply places to house and distribute books. It is also important to create an environment of “participatory culture” as referenced in Henry Jenkins’ work, *Confronting the Challenges of Participatory Culture: Media Education for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* ([http://digitallearning.macfound.org/atf/cf/%7B7E45C7E0-A3E0-4B89-AC9C-E807E1B0AE4E%7D/JENKINS\\_WHITE\\_PAPER.PDF](http://digitallearning.macfound.org/atf/cf/%7B7E45C7E0-A3E0-4B89-AC9C-E807E1B0AE4E%7D/JENKINS_WHITE_PAPER.PDF)). Joanne outlined the new skills and essential conditions that are needed in order to create this participatory culture in our libraries, as well as a wealth of ideas that can be implemented to bring our school communities into the library.

One condition that creates a participatory culture is incorporating play into library activities. Joanne noted that activities and assignments lose their appeal when they are seen simply as work. By combining elements of games and allowing the students to play, not only are teachers creating assignments that are more enjoyable, but also, they are encouraging greater participation and essentially creating an environment that enhances inquiry and learning. Whether it is a chess club, a trivial pursuit club, or a bowling tournament on a Wii gaming system, there are a multitude of ideas that can incorporate play in the school library.

Joanne also provided examples of non-play library activities which can be used to engage students. The key, she noted, is to determine the interests of the students and to build activities around those interests, such as making digital artifacts in an iMovie club, or participating in online simulation environments. The teacher-librarian can also present using Creative Commons materials, assist students with school media projects and then host a screening of mash-ups created by the students. Pending the availability of volunteer presenters in the community, the school library could also offer workshops on cooking, sewing or computer programming.

As times have changed, so too has the role of the school library. The space must be reinvented as a hub of activity rather than simply a room full of books. Teacher-librarians must continue to find new ways to reach out to the school community and bring them into the school libraries.

For more information contact Joanne De Groot at [degroot@ualberta.ca](mailto:degroot@ualberta.ca), follow her on Twitter @joannedegroot, or visit her blog at [www.joannedegroot.wordpress.com](http://www.joannedegroot.wordpress.com)

### Recommended Reading

*What School Leaders Need to Know about Digital Technologies and Social Media* edited by Scott McLeod & Chris Lehmann

*Libraries Got Game: Aligned Learning through Modern Board Games* by Brian Mayer & Christopher Harris

*Hanging Out, Messing Around, and Geeking Out: Kids Living and Learning with New Media* by Mizuko Ito, et al.

*The Socially Networked Classroom: Teaching in the New Media Age* by William Kist

*Digital Community Digital Citizen* by Jason Ohler

*Personal Learning Networks* by Will Richardson & Rob Mancabelli

*The Connected Educator* by Sheryl Nussbaum-Beach & Lani Ritter-Hall

### New Skills for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

- Play
- Performance
- Simulation
- Appropriation
- Multitasking
- Distributed Cognition
- Collective Intelligence
- Judgment
- Transmedia Navigation
- Networking
- Negotiation

### What Can a Teacher-Librarian Do?

- Develop your personal learning network
- Start a personal blog
- Read one of the books listed above as professional development
- Develop your library's online presence through a blog, wiki, Facebook page, etc.
- Help students display and share their work with a global audience by posting it to the library website or blog
- Share—your interests, your talents, your work
- Choose one or two of the skills outlined by Jenkins and think about ways to develop programs and services in your library that will support those skills
- Embrace new technologies and participatory culture personally and professionally
- Play with new technologies
- Participate in a 23 Things course

### Links & Videos from the Learning Event

All about Lego:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rpomaV8AxWA>

Henry Jenkins' TED Talk:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AFCLKa0XRlw>

Gaming in Education:

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=6rafVOgiXoI](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6rafVOgiXoI)

Transliteracy Blog:

<http://librariesandtransliteracy.wordpress.com>

Dean Shareski's K12 Online Conference Keynote:

Sharing, the Moral Imperative:

[http://k12online.ning.com/forum/topics/sharing-the-moral-imperative?xg\\_source=activity](http://k12online.ning.com/forum/topics/sharing-the-moral-imperative?xg_source=activity)